



## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Overview**

The Land Use Element provides written and graphic land use policy for the town. It addresses existing development characteristics, preferred future land use patterns, and general development guidelines necessary to achieve the preferred future development patterns. It draws upon existing land use patterns, environmental features, community preferences, and future population and employment forecasts to recommend a rational organization of land uses which will protect the town's existing character and promote the orderly, economic provision of public services.

In designating appropriate uses for land areas in the town, this element has the following broad purposes:

1. To facilitate the creation of a convenient, attractive, safe and harmonious community.
2. To encourage efficient use of land and eliminate potential land use conflicts.
3. To encourage economic growth that positively affects employment and the tax base and enhances the well-being of the entire community.
4. To provide decent, safe and sanitary housing of all types.
5. To encourage a variety of commercial, residential, employment, educational, recreational and cultural opportunities.
6. To protect against destruction of or encroachment upon historic and environmentally sensitive areas.
7. To reduce or prevent congestion on public streets.
8. To maintain the historic integrity and ambiance of the town through appropriate land uses, scale, design, and architectural elements.

### **Intent**

The overall intent of the Land Use Element is to treat similar lands in like manner. The designation of land areas for particular uses is based on consideration of the following factors:

1. Existing land use.
2. Character of the land and its suitability for particular uses.
3. Trends of growth or change.
4. Current and future land requirements of the community.
5. Current and future water and sewer requirements of the community.
6. Transportation needs.
7. Demand for housing, employment and shopping.
8. Demand for schools, parks, and other public facilities and services.
9. Conservation of natural resources and preservation of flood plains and steep slopes.
10. Preservation of property values.

The Land Use Element is designed to serve as a guide for public and private development decisions through the year 2015. Although all development envisioned by the Plan may not occur during this period, development which does occur can be coordinated with the town's goals and objectives for physical development.

While the Land Use Element technically is policy and not law, it is vitally important to the town and its developers. The Land Use Element is the basis for evaluation of rezonings. In addition, it sets forth numerous land use policies, action programs or review criteria that must be implemented. New or revised ordinances that manage growth and development must be adopted. The Land Use Element serves as the basis for the town's land use regulations, including the zoning and subdivision ordinances and rezoning of land. It indicates the types of zoning districts needed, the recommended location and design guidelines for different land use types, and specific areas requiring regulatory attention.

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

### **Historical Patterns**

The historic core of Leesburg reflects the mixture of land uses commonly found in traditional town centers, such as business and government facilities, interspersed with residential uses. These land uses are concentrated along the intersecting principal thoroughfares (Routes 7 and 15). Other streets in the downtown grid also contain mixed uses but are primarily residential in character. This arrangement--compact, convenient and pedestrian-oriented--prevailed for the town's first two centuries, 1700s and 1800s. The only significant change was the addition of some industrial and transportation-related uses (quarry, stockyard, etc.) in the vicinity of the rail depot on the southeast edge of the old town.

Leesburg's rapid growth over the past 40 years added large areas of single-use development: residential subdivisions beyond the downtown core and extension of the commercial district along Route 7 (East Market Street) and Route 15 (South King Street at Catocin Circle). These newer areas reflect the segregation of uses that has become both possible and prevalent in our automobile-reliant age. In recent years, large-scale, suburban-style residential development has appeared on the town's periphery.

### **Current Land Use**

The land use profile shown in Table 6.1 is based on a December 1991 inventory by town staff and Planning Department records of development through April 1993. The profile indicates that nearly half of the town's land area is vacant or undeveloped (i.e., unimproved or used for agricultural purposes). This is due to the largely undeveloped land area which was annexed in 1984. About 10 percent of the undeveloped land has been platted for residential subdivisions that are not yet built.

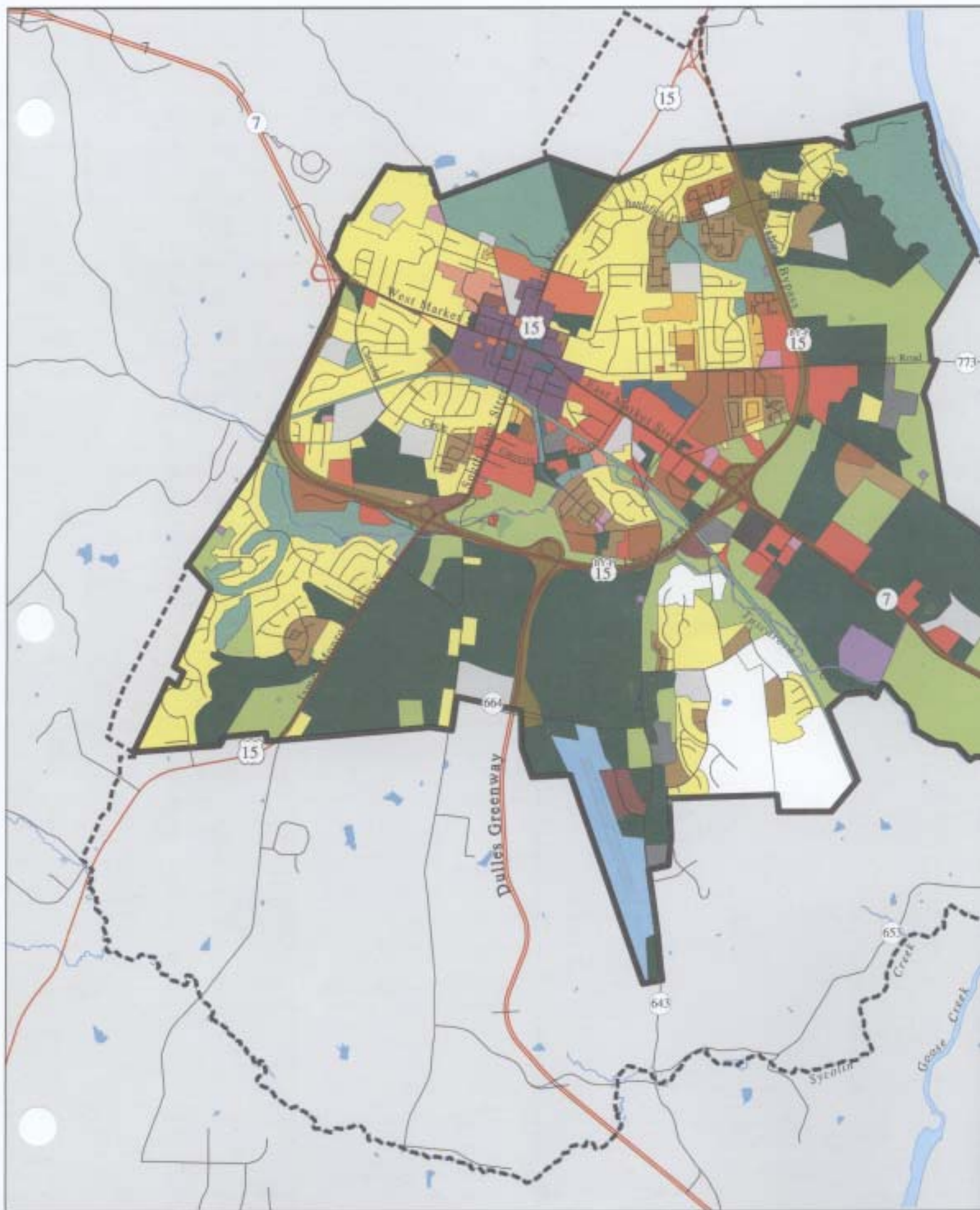
Table 6.1

## EXISTING LAND USE PROFILE

LAND USE	Acres	Percent of total
Residential	1,800	24.2%
Retail	221	3.0%
Office	170	2.3%
Industrial	121	1.6%
Public Uses	1,811	24.4%
<i>Buildings &amp; Facilities</i>	660	36.4%
<i>Parks</i>	431	23.8%
<i>Streets/right-of-way</i>	720	39.8%
Undeveloped	3,311	44.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,434</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
SOURCE: Department of Planning, Zoning & Development, January 1996 estimate		

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# The Town of Leesburg in Virginia

## Existing Land Use



### Residential

- Single Family Detached
- Duplex

- Townhouses
- Multi-Family

### Commercial and Employment

- Downtown/Mixed Use
- Office
- Industrial

- Retail/Commercial
- Retail/Office Mix

### Transportation

- Airport

- Arterials/Interchanges

### Institutional

- Town Hall, County  
County Admin./Courts
- Parks, Golf Courses and  
Open Space
- Places of Worship
- Hospital, Nursing Home  
Rescue Squad

- FAA
- Utilities and Town Shop
- Schools and Library

### Vacant

- Wooded
- Under Development

- Fields, Farms and Pastures
- Streams

Town Boundary

Urban Growth  
Boundary

Major Roads

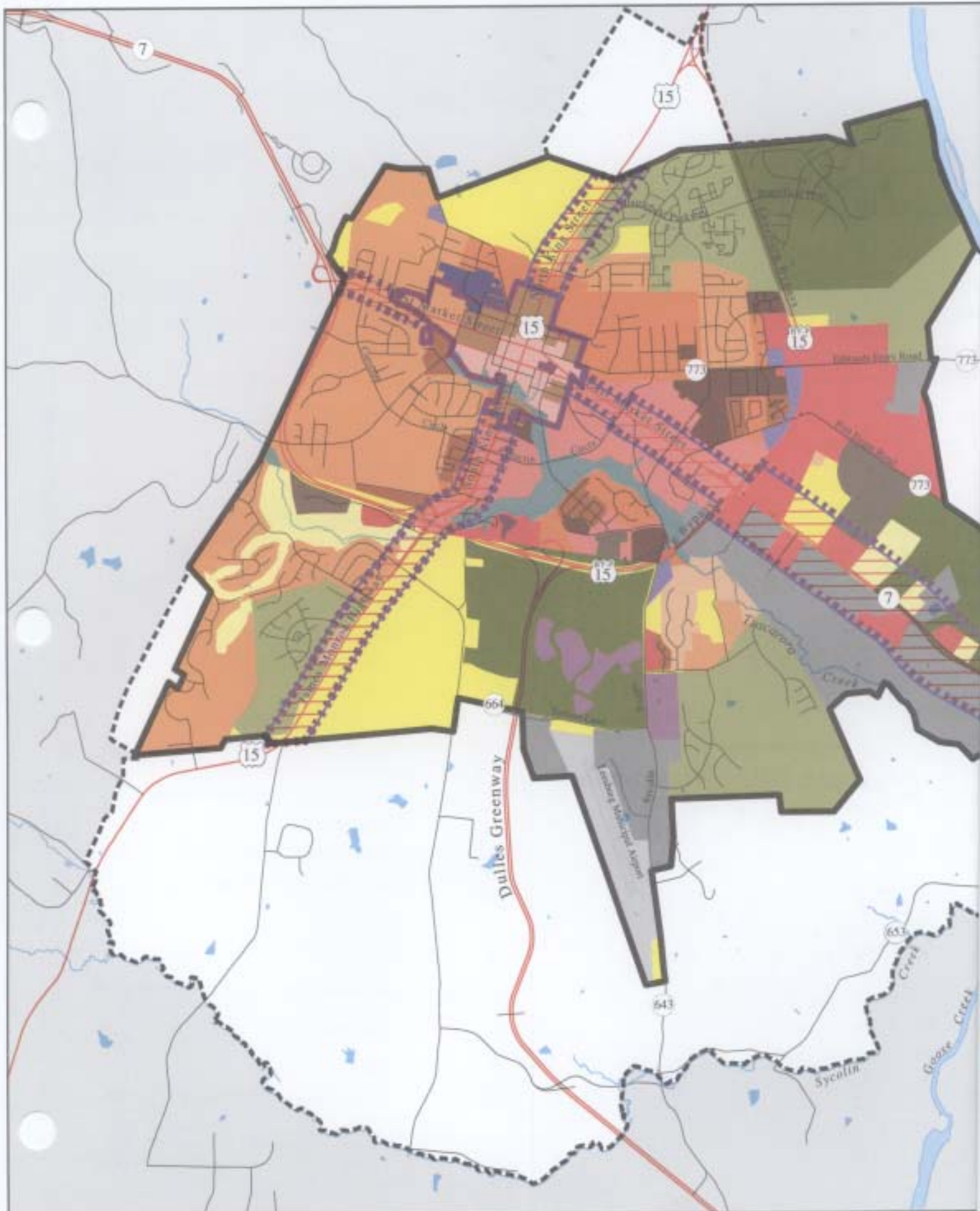
Secondary Roads

Water

Scale: One Inch Equals Approximately 3,200 feet.

*This map should be interpreted only in conjunction  
with the appropriate text of the 1997 Town Plan.*



































# The Town of Leesburg in Virginia

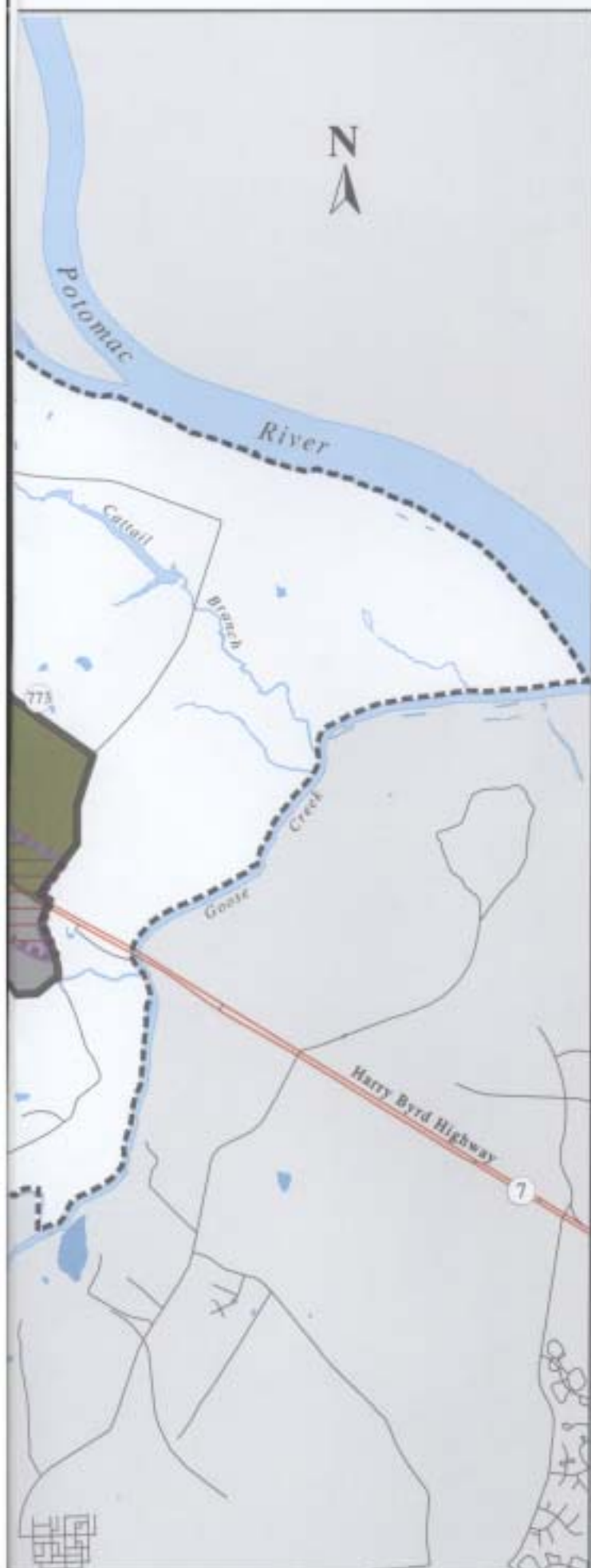
## Zoning

	B-1	Downtown Mixed Use District
	B-2	Established Corridor/Commercial District
	B-3	Community Retail/Commercial District
	O-1	General Office District
	I-1	Industrial Research Park District
	MA	Municipal Airport
	MC	Medical Center District
	PEC	Planned Employment Center
	F-1	Flood Zone District
	H-1	Historic District (Overlay)
	H-2	Corridor (Overlay)
	GC	Government Center
	R-E	Residential Estate District
	R-1	Single Family Residential District
	R-2	Single Family Residential District
	R-4	Single Family Residential District
	R-6	Single Family Residential District
	R-HD	Historic Residential District
	R-8	Townhouse Residential District
	R-16	Planned Development—Residential District
	R-22	Multi-Family Residential District
	PRN	Planned Residential Neighborhood
	PRC	Planned Residential Community

	Town Boundary		Urban Growth Boundary
	Major Roads		Secondary Roads
	Water		

Scale: One Inch Equals Approximately 3,200 Feet

This map is a graphic depiction of zoning as existed at the time of Plan adoption. Zoning is changed from time to time. Refer to the official Zoning Map in the Department of Planning, Zoning and Development for site-specific zoning districts.



## **Community Design**

### **Old and Historic District**

A grid street pattern lined with one and two story buildings predominates the Old and Historic District. This area has no or minimal setbacks along the street frontage with predominantly on-street parking. Supplemental parking garages have been constructed. Architectural styling of existing buildings is comprised of Late Georgian; Federal; Greek Revival; various Eclectic Revivals such as Gothic, Romanesque, and American Queen Anne; the Colonial Revival style, which continued to be popular well into the fourth quarter of the 20th century; the bungalow style of the early 20th century; and many vernacular structures. These building styles and periods comprise the unique character of the Old and Historic District. Brick sidewalks, nineteenth century lighting fixtures and park benches line the streets.

### **First tier residential and commercial area**

Residential subdivisions and commercial development built between the 1940s through the 1970s are located east and south of the Old and Historic District on or near East Market Street and South King Street, and along Catocin Circle. These residential subdivisions are of a more curvilinear than a grid design. Commercial developments are automobile oriented with offstreet parking, larger setbacks, and numerous curb cuts. Architecture is a mix of traditional, contemporary, and modern. Retail, automotive and home services and supplies mark commercial development during this period.

### **Newly developing residential and commercial area**

Newer developments (1980s to the present) located beyond the first tier are built on larger tracts of land and have an entirely curvilinear street pattern. Fewer curb cuts and larger setbacks, planned sign systems and increased landscaping are characteristics of this newer development. Retail business is the predominant non-residential use. Several large tracts of vacant land still intersperse this developing area. These areas present an opportunity for providing appropriate, quality gateways to the town.

## **LAND USE TRENDS**

### **Trends in Development Activity**

#### **Based on Stage of Development**

Table 6.3 provides a look at the present and potential future allocation of land in the four primary categories of private development. For each category, the figures shown include the number of dwelling units or square footage of non-residential structures, the acreage it occupies, and the resulting density. The columns reflect three increments of development, with the cumulative totals they would produce. The increments are defined as follows:

- **Existing Development**: This column includes all structures that were built or under construction as of April 1, 1993. It does not include vacant lots in approved subdivisions.
- **Approved But Not Yet Built**: This section shows proposed development that has all necessary approvals by the town. Upon issuance of a building permit, it can be built. This increment can be regarded as the

development that is "in the pipeline." It includes the remaining lots in subdivision sections that are not yet fully built out; it does not include future sections or phases of a subdivision that do not yet have final town approval.

- **Proposed But Not Finally Approved:** This section includes all additional development that has been proposed and has some form of preliminary approval by the town, for example, approved rezoning. All development proposals in this section are technically "under review" by the town, although a number of them have been inactive for some time.

**Table 6.3**  
**Existing and Proposed Development**  
**in Selected Land Use Categories**

	Existing Development*	Approved But Not Yet Built	Cumulative Town Total	Proposed But Not Finally Approved	Cumulative Town Total
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>	7,592 DU 1,631 AC 4.65 DU/AC	1,640 DU 474 AC 3.46 DU/AC	9,232 DU 2,105 AC 4.39 DU/AC	4,807 DU 1,399 AC 3.44 DU/AC	14,039 DU 3,504 AC 4.01 DU/AC
<b>RETAIL / COMMERCIAL</b>	1,784,500 SF 205 AC .20 FAR	565,934 SF 64 AC .20 FAR	2,340,434 SF 269 AC .20 FAR	878,561 SF 97 AC .21 FAR	3,228,995 SF 366 AC .20 FAR
<b>OFFICE</b>	1,168,100 SF 170 AC .16 FAR	578,538 SF 39 AC .34 FAR	1,746,638 SF 209 AC .19 FAR	5,020,109 SF 331 AC .35 FAR	6,766,747 SF 540 AC .29 FAR
<b>INDUSTRIAL</b>	168,000 SF 121 AC .03 FAR	483,100 SF 32 AC .35 FAR	651,100 SF 153 AC .10 FAR	2,804,577 SF 240 AC .27 FAR	3,455,677 SF 393 AC .20 FAR
* As of April 1, 1993 Source: Department of Planning, Zoning and Development, April 1993					

#### Based on Land Use

Speculative development proposals during the 1980's produced an abundance of zoned but undeveloped land in all categories. It can reasonably be assumed that some portion of these proposals will be modified in response to market demands over the next few years. Therefore, Table 6.3 is useful primarily as an indicator of past trends and the extent to which vacant land in the town has been at least tentatively committed to a particular type of use.

- **Residential:** By 1993, Leesburg's average residential density increased from 3.5 dwelling units per acre (1986) to 4.65 dwelling units per acre. This increase is attributable to the addition of a large number of apartment units in the late 1980's. Multi-family units accounted for 35 percent of the housing stock in 1986 but more than 40 percent by 1990. However, the trend in future development that is approved or proposed is toward town houses and single family detached housing; it accounts for 49 percent of the units in the approved "pipeline" and 40 percent of the proposed-but-not-approved housing. Over the last decade, the most notable residential development activity occurred in the Exeter and Potomac Crossing planned development, both located in the northeast quadrant of town adjacent to the Route 15 Bypass. Other significant

residential development during the 1980's included Gateway and the Woodlea Manor, Tavistock Farms, Kincaid, Greenway, Edwards Landing and Beauregard Estates subdivisions. Harper Park (Potomac Station) and the Leesburg South areas can be expected to develop before the end of the century.

- **Retail/Commercial:** The influx of new residents during the 1980's brought corresponding gains in retail land use, primarily along existing commercial corridors: East Market Street, Catoctin Circle and King Street. However, more than one million square feet of retail development has also been approved for a new community commercial area at the intersection of Edwards Ferry Road and the Bypass. This area began developing in 1990. The 350,000-square-foot Battlefield Shopping Center, Leesburg's largest, opened in early 1992. Shenandoah Square Shopping Center, anchored by a Wal-Mart store, opened in mid-1993. A third shopping center planned at this intersection accounts for almost 80 percent of the remaining approved "pipeline" retail/commercial development.<sup>1</sup>
- **Office Development:** By April 1993, Leesburg had approximately 1,168,000 square feet of constructed office space--a 160 percent increase since 1985. Office development has not been concentrated in any one area; the Old and Historic District has traditionally served as the focal point for office uses in town. Outside the downtown area, new office construction has occurred chiefly near the airport, which is also the site of most of the approved office development "pipeline." Of the 5 million square feet of additional office development that has been proposed but not finally approved, 87 percent is contained in three projects: Stratford (1.4 million sq. ft.), located between the Bypass and the airport; and Leesburg Corner (.9 million sq. ft.) at the northeast corner of the Bypass and Route 7.<sup>1</sup>
- **Industrial:** Since 1985, the town has approved about a half-million square feet of light industrial development in the vicinity of the airport; it has yet to be constructed. Another 2.8 million square feet has been proposed but not yet approved. The majority of this proposed industrial development is located near the airport and along Route 7 east of the Bypass.

## **Emerging Issues and Opportunities**

### **Telecommuting**

Telecommuting is a work arrangement for performing work electronically, where employees work at a location other than the primary work location, such as the home or in a subordinate office. This practice, and its close relative, "home-based businesses," is increasing in popularity. A continuing significant increase in this practice could impact the town in the following ways:

- Greater numbers of employees will be able to work from home or in telecommuting centers during some portion of their work week.
- This trend will aggravate the soft market for new office space in the region. Its effect on the office market in an outer area such as Leesburg is not certain.
- The number of work trips could be reduced and their length shortened to some extent.
- Telecommuting office centers (satellite offices where employees have access to clerical assistance, photocopy and mailing services, meeting rooms and computer equipment serving employers located outside of the area)

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<sup>1</sup>This 1993 analysis does not reflect the 1997 rezoning of the Leesburg Corner site to permit regional retail development.

could be located in Leesburg for employers located in Fairfax County and the District.

- More employment-related activity will occur in the home.

#### Dulles Greenway

The Dulles Greenway is a 14-mile, high capacity toll road extending from Route 28 near Dulles Airport to the Route 15 By-pass. No single force has had a greater impact on the pattern of land development in American cities in this century than highways. Access to transportation increases the value and demand for property. With the increased value and demand comes development pressure. Changes in value and market for land occurs miles from the opening of a new major highway. Past experience indicates that jurisdictions most often underestimate the impact of a new major highway on local land use and development patterns. Below are several potential impacts the Dulles Greenway could have on the town and surrounding area:

- The desirability of Leesburg as a place to live and have a business will increase.
- The value of land will increase, especially in the area of the Leesburg terminus, to the extent that speculative price increases have not already occurred due to the announcement and construction of the Greenway.
- The pace of development activity and pressure to change the use of property will increase, especially within several miles of the Greenway.
- Additional development pressures will be felt west of town as developers and speculators gain an appreciation of the proximity of a free flowing transportation corridor compared to the relatively lower cost of land to the west versus the east side of the town.

#### Residential Densities and Fiscal Balance

Density is the primary variable in determining the fiscal impact of residential development on the town. Preliminary plats have been approved for over 1,400 townhouse units in 1994 and 1995. This is the largest surge in this dwelling unit type in the Town's history. Townhouses have similar occupancy characteristics as single-family homes in terms of numbers of children and services demanded. However, they generally have a lower value, and generate less revenue for the town and county. These factors translate to less tax revenue for a similar level of service and expense to the town and county. If this trend continues, the town can be expected to be negatively impacted, fiscally. The result would be a need to adjust sources of revenue, such as taxes, to compensate for this shift in balance between revenues and expenses. The town should consider means of balancing types of land use, zoning, and development through an appropriate combination of regulation and incentives based on consideration of the fiscal consequences of land use and development patterns.

#### Erosion of the Non-residential Tax Base

Erosion of the non-residential tax base occurs when a net-revenue producing land use is displaced by a use which produces less net-revenue to the town or county. In some cases, a net *deficit*-producing use displaces revenue producing uses. The potential for this tax-base erosion falls within several categories:

- The most deleterious example is when residential uses replace non-residential uses. There is continuing pressure to change land uses from non-residential to residential just because the current market demand for

## *Land Use Element*

residential dwellings is stronger than the market for other uses. If this trend continues, the future tax base of the town will be eroded because revenue producing uses (businesses) are displaced by deficit-producing uses (residential). This will have an even greater effect if this occurs in areas of the town (east and southeast quadrants) where the long term best use of the land is for employment and industrial uses due to the proximity to both airports, and existing industrial land uses.

- Having a similar effect, but not as severe as the example above, involves displacing employment uses (the optimum net revenue-generating use for the town) with local-serving retail uses. The town should consider means of balancing types of land use, zoning, and development based on consideration of the fiscal consequences of land use and development patterns.

### Mixed uses comprised of conference, entertainment, retail and commercial recreation component

There is a nationwide trend toward combining retail, entertainment and related uses. Combinations that have demonstrated appeal and which may attract visitors to Leesburg from the region include:

- Retail and commercial recreation such as amusement or theme rides and other participatory activities.
- Retail, conference and lodging
- Retail and entertainment, such as an outdoor pavillion for live performances.

### Impact of New county Government Center on Old and Historic District Land Use

The Loudoun County Government Center provides approximately 150,000 square feet of additional office space within the Old and Historic District. This facility may attract additional office uses such as attorneys, engineers, surveyors, and consultants of various types to the immediate area. There is some community concern that the demand for office space will bid up land and rental prices to the detriment of existing retail/tourist oriented businesses along and near King Street. Several possible approaches include:

- limit office uses to a particular area
- reserve a designated area for only retail and tourist-oriented uses
- limit the proportion of office use on any parcel within the District.



## **VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

### **Overview**

The interrelationship between land uses is a primary determinant of the town's character and quality of life. The town must offer quality housing, neighborhoods and commercial development to attract quality employment opportunities. By fostering the creation of stable, attractive neighborhoods and maintaining the town's unique, historic ambience, Leesburg can provide a community which current and future residents consider a "home town."

The "home town" identity of Leesburg is established to a large degree by its historic mixed use development pattern. The "mixed land use pattern of the Old and Historic District is characteristic of urban centers, combining a variety of commercial, employment, residential, institutional, civic and community uses in close proximity to each other. This land use pattern provides greater opportunity for residents to walk to work and shopping and to participate in the life of the community. Leesburg's downtown is a traditional mixed use area, and much of the town's built-up area inside the Bypass has a mixed use character. The "infill" policies of this plan will guide development in these areas.

Over the past several decades, growth in urbanizing areas has tended to take the form of large-scale, single-use development. The sprawling residential subdivisions, office or industrial parks, and shopping centers found in suburban areas are examples. Typically, such pockets of uniform land use are deliberately isolated from each other and accessible only by automobile. The lack of interaction among land uses serves to weaken the sense of community.

It is a principal goal of this Plan to promote efficient land use that reflects the human scale, diversity and unique character of Leesburg. For that reason, pedestrian-scale mixed use is recommended as an option that should be considered to guide future development in appropriate areas outside the Bypass and in the adjacent Urban Growth Area. New mixed use developments should be phased to assure a balance of uses, and embody uses, design, and scale compatible with the surrounding area and the character of the town as a whole. It is recognized that not all uses can be combined compatibly and that some business and industrial uses are best developed homogeneously. Other factors, such as the transportation network or infrastructure availability, may suggest logical locations for concentrating certain uses. It is also recognized that some single-use development is likely to occur where it has already been approved. Notwithstanding such exceptions, this Plan encourages development which combines various land uses in a harmonious, complementary and efficient manner.

The following precepts for growth serve as the basis for the land use recommendations contained in the remainder of this element of the Town Plan:

- Development under mixed use and cluster concepts to avoid sprawling suburban development patterns.
- Distribution of commercial and employment uses more equally around town as a foundation for multi-faceted neighborhoods reflecting the variety characteristic of historic Leesburg.
- Eventual development of two commercial centers outside the bypass combining significant retail and employment uses convenient to new residential development.
- Maintaining downtown as a primary focal point (tourist destination, cultural, and government center) of Leesburg.
- Establishment of an open space network to enhance the livability of Leesburg's neighborhoods, provide recreational opportunities, and link residential areas with community facilities, shopping and jobs.

## **Desired Town Characteristics**

The Town's vision extends particularly to new development to achieve the following characteristics:

### Distinctive Town Gateways

The principal entry corridors to the town (Route 7, East and West and Route 15, North and South, and the Dulles Greenway/7-15 Bypass) provide the powerful "first impression" to visitors of the town. The first mile or so coming into the town should receive special treatment. The vision for these areas is broad vistas of quality landscaping and open space located in deep setbacks from the street right of way. No reverse frontage lots are adjacent to the right-of-way and utility structures are well screened and set back a considerable distance from the road. Parking is buffered from offsite view from the highways or is located to the rear of buildings. Buildings are traditional in design. Sign systems are well-designed, earthtoned, low level monument ground signs.

### Downtown Tourist and Government Center

Downtown is an attractive tourist destination as well as the seat of county government. The vision is an enhanced tourism and government center function. The Town's provision of quality, period-focused infrastructure (brick sidewalks, benches, lighting, pedestrian-friendly streets, landscaping) and design controls on infill development will help enhance the tourism potential. The expansion of the downtown judicial center and relocation of the primary jail facility away from downtown will further this vision.

### Compatible-Scale Development

Leesburg is proud of its human-scaled development, its "user-friendly" ambiance comprised of walking distance convenience to most necessities, moderate-scaled commercial businesses and associated development, and mix of uses within compact areas. The vision is of a moderate scaled development pattern by discouraging large retail "box" development, and encouraging mixed use development. Sites are designed for easy pedestrian access within as well as to the sites, and all new development is designed at a scale compatible with that of the older areas of the town.

### Traditional Town Planning Concepts

The vision is new development that complements the design, scale, street pattern, and ambiance of the older areas of the town. Components include a pedestrian-friendly grid street pattern (forming two to five-acre blocks of land for development), small to moderate sized buildings, compatibility and consistency with adjoining land uses, and traditional architectural design.

### Attractive Older Areas

An increasing number of subdivisions are more than 30 years old. The town will be proactive in facilitating revitalization of these areas in advance of obvious physical decay and the need for redevelopment. The vision is for all neighborhoods to remain physically attractive and vital.

Integrated Transportation Network

The vision is a pedestrian, bicycle, and trail network that links residential, retail, historic, educational and recreational facilities in a manner which encourages usage of these facilities and promotes social interaction of the residents and visitors.

Community Characteristics that Attract Economic Development

In the Washington metropolitan region, one of the most important factors in attracting economic development is the quality of the community. Quality businesses look more for outstanding community characteristics than for abbreviated development processing or shortcuts in design standards. An outstanding community includes several important components, including:

- Quality community development and aesthetics, including abundant, well-maintained landscaping, ample open space and parks, well-maintained public infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, public sign system and other above-ground components), minimal sign clutter, substantial building and parking area setbacks along major roadways, well-designed and maintained private development and associated common spaces
- Quality schools in terms of academic excellence, accessibility, and appearance
- Nearby opportunities for higher and vocational education
- Cultural, recreational and entertainment opportunities nearby
- Variety of housing and shopping options
- Favorable regulatory climate combining timely processing with quality development
- Maintenance of low crime rate with emphasis on proactive community policing

**GOAL AND OBJECTIVES**

**Goal:** To maintain and encourage efficient land use patterns which integrate residential, commercial, public and employment uses in planned neighborhoods designed to complement Leesburg's existing character.

**Objectives:**

- Encourage growth which decreases the residential property taxes to less than 60 percent of all real estate taxes.
- Promote the Town Plan's defined concept of mixed use development as an economical, energy-efficient and environmentally sound use of land.
- Maintain the historic and unique charm of the town by encouraging innovative and selective land use decisions that enhance existing uses and connect new land uses to the town.
- In an effort to balance land use, encourage planned developments that combine residential, public, parks/open space, commercial and employment uses where appropriate.
- Maintain the downtown business district as the center of commerce and government and consider its selective expansion.

- Promote a mixture of employment uses around the airport, including research and development, light industry, and other uses supportive of airport operations.
- Encourage land development which will respect and conserve natural resources and environmentally sensitive land areas.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**

### **Overview**

The development guidelines and accompanying Land Use Policy Map (Map 6.3 at the end of this element) provide a framework for town land use decisions during the 20-year planning period. The elements of this implementation program include:

#### **Land Use Policy (text)**

This section contains policy guidelines to help the town assess the relative merits of specific land use proposals in the context of the town's goals and objectives. Guidelines are presented in the following categories:

General Land Use Policies	Business Use Policies
Residential Use Policies	Industrial Use Policies
Commercial Use Policies	Infill Policies

In some cases, sub-categories with their own specific policies are identified. For example, the Commercial Use section includes both general policies and specific policies tailored for the historic commercial district, arterial commercial areas, neighborhood retail centers, and community/regional commercial centers.

Policies stated in one of these categories may also apply in other categories of development. For example, some of the business use categories make provision for a residential component in business development; residential use policies should therefore be consulted in planning the residential component. Likewise, infill development would be subject not only to the specific infill policies but also to the policies pertaining to the type of development contemplated.

#### **Land Use Policy ("Policy Map" - Map 6.3)**

This map provides a generalized illustration of land use recommendations for future development in the town and the Urban Growth Area. In consulting the map, the following constraints should be noted:

- The map is not intended to be parcel-specific. Uses are recommended for broad areas, generally bounded by natural features or other prominent physical dividers such as major roads and highways. In making land use decisions for specific parcels, relevant policies stated throughout this Plan must be considered in conjunction with the map's general recommendation.
- The map is primarily concerned with land use in areas that are largely undeveloped (i.e., outside the Bypass). For the parts of town that are already built up, adequate policies are stated in the Land Use element text and elsewhere in the Plan to guide land use decisions on infill and redevelopment.
- Land use designations in the Urban Growth Area are intended to guide the town in making recommendations to Loudoun County, which retains regulatory authority over that area.

### Action Program

The Action Program on page 6-39 is comprised of implementing actions to be undertaken during the next five years.

### Review Criteria

Review criteria on page 6-40 is information which should be tracked to identify trends, adjust projections, and assess the effectiveness of land use policies.

### General Land Use Policies

The following are the Town's general land use policies:

1. Leesburg should encourage a balanced community with sufficient opportunities for commercial, residential and employment growth, and recreation.
2. The town should maintain a development review process which evaluates proposals in a thorough and timely manner.
3. New development should recognize and preserve the town's natural, historic and architectural resources for present and future residents.
4. The town should promote a mixture of uses that provides neighborhood focus, reduces energy consumption and establishes an efficient land use pattern.
5. The historic downtown should be recognized as a valuable community asset and should be protected and maintained as a central focus of the town.
6. The town should exercise significant influence over development in its Urban Growth Area and participate actively in the review of development proposed in the Urban Growth Area and surrounding areas of strategic interest to the town.
7. Zoning should conform with the intent of policies contained in the Town Plan.
8. The town should encourage the elimination of non-conforming uses in accordance with state law and the town Plan.
9. The town should consider the cost of providing educational and other public services when making land use decisions.
10. The town should encourage land uses where development generates more revenue than the cost of required services.
11. The town should promote quality new developments that blend cohesively to the existing community and minimize impact on existing land use.
12. Flood plains and similar environmentally sensitive areas shall not be counted as part of the gross area used for calculating the dwelling unit or floor area yield utilized to determine consistency with the densities and intensities of each land use category of the Land Use Policy Map.

13. The town should establish a mechanism for review of fiscal and market impacts
14. The town should establish a mechanism for objective, professional town review of fiscal and market impacts that may result from amendments to the Land Use Policy Map and associated policies of the Town Plan.

## **Infill**

### **Overview**

Infill provides opportunities to strengthen the fabric of the community through development of vacant or under used sites. The principal advantage of infill development is that infrastructure items such as streets and sewer and water mains are usually already in place. A potential disadvantage is that the land cost may be high, reflecting the value of surrounding established uses. Also, development costs for a small site may be proportionally higher than they would be for a large tract. From a public policy perspective, infill is attractive because it promotes efficient land use and requires minimal investment in new capital improvements.

In most of the town inside the Bypass, land is already developed or development patterns are well established. The primary land use concern is assuring that development of vacant or under used parcels is compatible with adjoining uses. Therefore, the Land Use Policy Map does not designate any particular type of land use for much of the area inside the Bypass, rather, this area is recommended for infill development. General policies for infill development are listed below. In addition, infill development would also be guided by other policies in this element applicable to the land use proposed for the infill site, such as residential, corridor commercial, etc.

### **Infill Policies**

1. Infill development should complement existing development.
2. Infill development may serve as a transition between incompatible uses.
3. Site design and architectural treatment of infill should complement adjacent uses while reflecting the overall character of the community.
4. The town should encourage the completion of dead end streets to complete the grid street system and improve the accessibility to potential infill development sites.
5. Present infrastructure or lack of it (i.e., narrow roads, lack of sidewalks, existing trees and vegetation, interesting curvature of roads, etc.) helps define Leesburg by creating its character. The eclectic character of our past should be modified only when necessary and with great care.
6. The town will evaluate proposed infill development applications based on how the transitional use functions on the site relative to the established development pattern as well as on the use itself. Evaluation criteria established to determine the relationship of surrounding uses with the proposed infill use should included:
  - Amount of open space and impervious surface
  - Intensity of use
  - The impact of noise and light generated on site
  - The impacts on the site due to existing or planned governmental and regional transportation facilities



7. Infill should be consistent with the capacity of the town to provide adequate public infrastructure to serve the new use.
8. Consider means of providing funding for off-site capital improvements necessary to promote priority infill development.
9. Ensure that new development projects provide interparcel access opportunities to adjacent vacant parcels so that future infill projects may be efficiently served.

## **Land Use Compatibility**

### **Overview**

Compatibility between land uses is important not only from the standpoint of health, safety, and welfare, but also for other reasons such as noise, glare, nature of traffic, useability of yard areas, aesthetics and the optimization of property values. Appropriate transitions should be assured as early in the development process as feasible. If the Town Plan is amended in the future to accommodate a proposed development plan, compatibility, buffering and use transitions should be addressed in the Plan amendment. If a development proposal requires rezoning, the rezoning and associated proffers should address compatibility issues. If a development proposal is at the platting or development plan stage, these documents must reflect and implement applicable buffer policy. Tables 6.4 and 6.5 set forth generalized use transition standards to be applied during the development review process.

### **Compatibility Policies**

1. The "Land Use Compatibility Table," below, shall serve as the general guide and basis for a new section of the Zoning Ordinance which will set forth buffer features and setback requirements between disparate land use classifications, zoning districts, and uses.
2. The "Land Use Compatibility Table" shall be used as the basis for review of rezonings and preliminary plats to help resolve potential incompatibility problems before they become institutionalized within approved zoning and plats.
3. The "Land Use Compatibility Table" is not intended to apply to existing built parcels, to undeveloped portions of developments which have approved final plats, nor to areas within the Old and Historic District.
4. The "Land Use Compatibility Table" shall be interpreted in a manner which recognizes the combined effect of distance, landscaping, structures, and design features such as decorative blank walls, height and bulk in achieving overall land use compatibility. For example, the suggested distances are not to be taken literally when other design features help to mitigate incompatibilities.

**Table 6.4**  
**Land Use Compatibility Table**

This table provides general policy guidance for transitions and buffering needed between various land uses outside the Old and Historic District. Follow these steps:

- 1) Identify the two adjacent uses in question in the table that are most similar to the uses in the field (existing, if built, zoned if not built, planned if not zoned in accordance with the Plan.)
- 2) Read across and down to where the row and column converge. (The same uses are listed in the first row and first column.)
- 3) The letters A through F indicate the level of compatibility between the two uses, and appropriate transition/buffer mitigation measure as defined by the Land Use Compatibility Code in Table 6.5.

"General Land Use Type" pertains to generic land uses as they be reflected by land use classifications of the Land Use Policy Map of the Town Plan, zoning districts (existing or proposed), and actual existing land uses. As additional guidance, the more intensive land use (as measured by *density* for residential uses, *FAR* for commercial uses, or highest per acre assessment) is responsible for providing all or most of the transitional use and buffer obligation set forth below. This table is not intended to be applied in the Old and Historic District due to the special mixed use design considerations established for that area.

General Land Use Type									
General Land Use Type	Residential, 1 du/acre or less	Single Family, detached, more than 1 du/acre	Duplex and townhouse	Multifamily up to 25' height	Multifamily, more than 25' height	Retail or office up to 25' height	Retail, office over 25' height, and all service uses	Industrial and Distrib.-related uses	Uses generating significant impacts of light, glare, noise, odors, vibration, particulates, including limited access and principle arterials
Residential, 1 du/acre or less	A	B	C	D	E	E	E	F	F
Single Family, detached, more than 1 du/acre	B	A	B	C	D	D	E	F	F
Duplex and townhouse	C	B	A	B	C	D	E	E	E
Multifamily up to 25 feet height	D	C	B	A	B	C	C	D	E
Multifamily, more than 25 foot height	E	D	C	B	A	B	C	D	E
Retail or office up to 25 foot height	E	D	D	C	B	A	B	C	D
Retail, office over 25 foot height, and all service uses	E	E	E	C	C	B	A	B	C
Industrial and Distribution-related uses	F	F	E	D	D	C	B	A	B
Uses generating significant impacts of light, glare, noise, odors, vibration, particulates including limited access and principle arterials	F	F	F	E	E	D	C	B	A

**Table 6.5**  
**Land Use Compatibility Code**

This table relates the land use compatibility code based on land use combinations set forth in Table 6.4, above, to the appropriate *generalized* mitigation measures. It is intended that development regulations such as the zoning ordinance or Design and Construction Standards Manual, as appropriate, provide *specific* standards that are consistent with these policies. The “distances” specified are setbacks appropriate if no other mitigation measures were applied. The need for the amount of distance specified herein would be reduced to the extent that other mitigation measures such as berms and landscaping are applied.

Compatibility Code	Nature of Compatibility	Distance (1):	Buffering(1):	Other Measures:
<b>A</b>	Compatible	No supplemental distances required	No supplemental buffering required	None
<b>B</b>	Compatible with minor mitigation	Double the setback of the more restrictive use	Minimal supplemental screening	None
<b>C</b>	Somewhat compatible requires moderate mitigation	Triple the setback of the more restrictive use	Moderate amount of supplemental screening	Extra setbacks and/or buffering should be provided next to service and utility areas
<b>D</b>	Marginally compatible; requires extensive mitigation	200' minimum	Substantial supplemental screening	Extra setbacks and/or buffering should be provided next to service and utility areas
<b>E</b>	Somewhat incompatible; requires extraordinary mitigation	300' minimum	Substantial supplemental screening	Permit only under extraordinary conditions and if full mitigation is provided
<b>F</b>	Incompatible; not recommended	500' minimum	Substantial supplemental screening and noise/light barriers	Abutting uses not recommended

(1) Distance and buffering could be traded to a limited extent to achieve optimum land use compatibility. Such site plan components as vehicular access, circulation and parking areas, utilities and loading areas, and similar features must be particularly considered when considering appropriate mitigation measures.

**Policies by Type of Land Use**

**Residential Land Use**

Overview: Residential land uses account for the largest share of Leesburg's developed area. The residential policies listed below are designed to encourage the creation of stable, attractive neighborhoods in keeping with Leesburg's unique, historic character. These policies apply not only to areas shown for residential use on the Land Use Policy Map but also to residential uses within mixed use and infill areas.

The residential development standards in Table 6.6 describe the relationship between dwelling type, density, location and design for the residential land use designations shown on the Land Use Policy Map.

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**Table 6.6**  
**Residential Development Standards**

Housing Type and Density	Location and Suitability	Design Objectives
<b>Low Density Residential (LDR)</b>		
a. Single Family Detached 1-2(3) dwelling units per gross acre	Fort Beauregard site south of bypass, east of Rout 643. Critical environmental features make site well suited for large lot homes.	Preservation of steep slopes, ridge line, and historic fort to greatest extent possible.
b. Single Family Detached and Attached 2-3 (4) dwelling units per gross acre	Includes Allman and Hoffman tracts west of Route 15 South; county zone R-1 on the north side of town; and Santmyer tract. Historic Greenway estate on Allman tract. Contains some sensitive environmental features. Planned residential neighborhoods appropriate.	Design focus on establishing stable, quiet neighborhoods of predominantly single family homes. Preservation of Greenway historic site.
<b>Medium Density Residential</b>		
a. Single Family Detached, 2-4 dwelling units per gross acre	Rogers tract off Dry Mill Road; undeveloped tracts adjacent to West Catocin Circle. Density compatible with existing neighborhoods.	Use of infill design techniques such as compatible architectural styles, materials, and building forms.
b. Residential Mix 2-4(5) dwelling units per gross acre	Stowers and Leesburg South tracts; Leegate tract south of Tuscarora Creek. Few limiting environmental features. Planned residential communities appropriate.	Focus on creating self sufficient communities, providing residents with commercial, recreational and community facilities needs. Adequate landscaping to compensate for the scarcity of natural tree cover. Preservation of historic Fort Beauregard.
c. Residential Mix 3-5 dwelling units per gross acre	Exeter tract and Exeter Hills tract. Includes some limiting environmental features and a historic site. Planned residential communities appropriate.	Preservation of existing historic sites and natural features. Protection of historic character of Route 15 business entrance to town. Inclusion of well defined transitional area adjacent to existing neighborhood.
<b>High Density Residential</b>		
Apartments, townhouses, duplexes 6-10 dwelling units per gross acre	Located on B-2 and PDH-30 tracts. Existing zoning and adjacent uses make high density residential uses appropriate.	Excellent architectural design and site amenities. Inclusion of adequate recreational facilities.
<b>Infill Development</b>		
Density and type varied depending on zoning and character of adjacent land uses.	Small parcels located throughout the urbanized area which already have town services available.	Buffering to mitigate impacts on adjacent uses. Use of creative design techniques to ensure harmonious relationship with adjacent structures and uses. Inclusion of adequate recreational facilities.
<b>Mixed Use Residential (component of Business I or II)</b>		
Apartments, townhouses, up to 24 dwelling units per acre	Integration of residential uses with commercial and employment uses within mixed use centers. Elderly housing appropriate.	Residential uses located on upper floors of mixed-use buildings. Inclusion of safe pedestrian circulation within mixed use center.

The level of density does not necessarily relate to any specific dwelling type, although low density development would typically be single-family detached units, while high density would likely be multi-family.

Areas designated for residential use on the Land Use Policy Map for the most part reflect the existing land use pattern or current zoning. The town encourages provision of a variety of housing types in these areas, within the recommended density limitations.

Residential components of areas designated on the map for business uses should be appropriate to the recommended intensity of development. Apartment buildings and higher density townhouses could be successfully integrated into a higher density business area; single-family detached houses probably could not.

In the area of town designated for infill development, the density of new residential development should be compatible with the intensity of surrounding land uses. Other factors, such as the impact of the development on the servicing road network and utility systems, may also affect the allowable density.

**Residential Land Use Policies:**

1. New residential development, schools, and recreation areas should be located in proximity to one another.
2. The town encourages creation and maintenance of quiet, stable neighborhoods with sufficient home ownership opportunities for persons wishing to make Leesburg their permanent home.
3. The town encourages development of larger residential communities under planned development district regulations to provide a mix of housing, community facilities, open space and recreational facilities, and to insure adequate and timely provision of amenities in these communities.
4. The town encourages residential uses downtown to maintain its mixed use character.
5. Common open space in residential areas should perform multiple functions by providing recreational opportunities, visual relief and natural storm water retention.
6. The integrity of established neighborhoods should be protected.
7. Dwelling units located along arterial and limited access roads should be adequately screened with an attractive buffer area.
8. Pedestrian access should be provided between residential areas, parks, schools, libraries, commercial centers and the town's open space network.
9. Housing for the elderly should be located in areas with convenient access to medical, shopping and service facilities.
10. Multi-family developments should include adequate recreational facilities, open space, landscaping and buffering.
11. The town should ensure adequate, safe pedestrian circulation within and between residential subdivisions.
12. Minimize the use of reverse frontage lots along arterials - encourage frontage roads, instead.
13. Encourage the use of berms and dense landscaping as a screening device over the use of wood fences when buffering residential areas from public streets to provide noise abatement and a visual barrier.



14. If wood fences are essential in common or planned buffer areas, require a design that enhances their strength and durability. This policy is not intended to preclude the use of wooden fencing between individual private lots.
15. If the number of residential dwelling units is proposed to increase from that which is currently approved, the developer shall provide to the town a fiscal impact analysis that demonstrates the long term fiscal benefits to the town as a part of any application for Plan amendment, rezoning, proffer amendment or similar action.
16. Maintain an annual average residential dwelling unit type mix of 50 percent single-family detached, 30 percent townhouse, and 20 percent multi-family, or as close thereto as possible through the rezoning, preliminary plat, and final plat review process.
17. The density ranges for the three mapped residential land use classifications and residential portions of mixed use developments are given in terms of the number of dwelling units *per gross acre*. Gross acre is intended to mean the total privately owned area of a proposed project designated within a particular land use. Existing rights-of-way are owned by the public, therefore, they are not privately owned and shall not be counted. Future right-of-way proposed to be dedicated as part of a subdivision is privately owned at the time of rezoning, and therefore can be counted as part of the gross acreage.
18. The lower number of the density range indicates the density which is allowed when the developer provides all public facilities required by the Leesburg Subdivision and Land Development Regulations. If all zoning and other town ordinances are met, the property is entitled to zoning which permits *up to* 50 percent of the density range of the Land Use Policy Map designation, i.e. 2.5 dwelling units per acre in Low Density Residential, 3 dwelling units per acre in Medium density residential, and 6 units per acre in High Density Residential. The property owner may be granted zoning which permits *more than* 50 percent of the density range, up to 100 percent of the specified range, if design, amenities, and infrastructure provisions as reflected by proffers or other performance guarantees exceed ordinance requirements. Densities greater than 50 percent of the density range shall be known as a “density bonus.” Design, amenities, and infrastructure provisions as reflected by proffers or other performance guarantees which exceed ordinance requirements shall be known as “additional development benefits.” This policy will not be in effect until Policy 19, below, is implemented through adoption of appropriate Zoning Ordinance Amendments. Until such time, only zoning that permits densities at the lower end of each density range shall be permitted.
19. The Zoning Ordinance shall be reviewed and refined to assure that the relationship between density bonuses and additional development benefits support Town Plan Objectives, generally, and particularly the priority objectives listed in Table 6.7, below:

**Table 6.7**  
**Priority Objectives for Granting Density Bonuses**

<b>Priority Town Objective:</b>	<b>Development Characteristics Needed to Achieve Priority Town Objectives:</b>
Promote cost effective transportation systems	Provide substantial offsite road improvements; Provide a network of sidewalks, paths and trails for use by the general public
Preserve and enhance the character and scale of the Town's traditional historic development pattern	Provide neo-traditional development design features in subdivision and building design (grid street pattern, small front yards, alleys, sidewalks, office over retail, residences over commercial, etc.), mix of uses (residential with commercial and office), scale (compact, pedestrian-friendly siting), and architectural design (traditional architecture featuring brick and wood materials complementary to the architecture in the Old and Historic District)
Provide additional employment opportunities in close proximity to residential areas	Provide substantial employment opportunities in mixed use developments where a substantial portion of the development is non-residential, especially office, employment, tourism, and conference center-related; Guarantee development of the non-residential portion of mixed use developments prior to, or concurrently with the residential portion
Ensure sites and facilities are available to meet or exceed the level of service standards set forth in the Plan	Provide supplemental land dedication for public sites and facilities; assist in development of sites and facilities
Ensure that the Town's gateways distinguish the town as a quality, historic community, which champions environmental beauty and high caliber development.	Lands visible from the Town's gateways are developed using extraordinary design measures such as extensive roadway buffers, extensive landscaping, preservation of massive areas of wooded areas and fields, substantial use transition buffers, and development design features which strikingly enhance the Town's image as a quality, historic town.

### Commercial Land Use

Overview: Commercial land uses are an important element of Leesburg's position as the major trade and service center for Loudoun County. Presently the town has nearly 1.8 million square feet of developed commercial space, primarily retail, and almost 1.2 million square feet of space in office use. This space is divided among the historic downtown district, arterial commercial uses along East Market Street, South King Street and Catoctin Circle, and a community commercial center at the intersection of Edwards Ferry Road and the Route 15 Bypass.

Five commercial land use classifications are identified, Historic Commercial District, Arterial Commercial, Neighborhood Retail Centers, Community Commercial Centers, and Regional Retail Center. Refer to Table 6.8 for a comparison of characteristics. Two of the five classifications are specifically designated on the Land Use Policy Map: Community Commercial Centers and Regional Retail Center. The others are located in the map's "infill" area or--in the case of neighborhood retail--integrated within residential land uses.

**Table 6.8**  
**Table of Commercial Land Uses**

<b>Commercial Land Use Characteristics</b>	<b>Historic Commercial District</b>	<b>Arterial Commercial</b>	<b>Neighborhood Retail Centers</b>	<b>Community Commercial Centers</b>	<b>Regional Retail Center</b>
<b>Primary uses</b>	Retail, tourist-oriented, residences	Retail, personal services, restaurants, commercial support facilities	Neighborhood-serving retail and personal services	Retail and service	Retail uses
<b>Secondary Uses</b>	Office, financial, personal services	High density residential, office	Repair and professional services	Office	Office and service uses
<b>Location</b>	Old and Historic District (not specified on Land Use Policy Map)	East Market Street between the Historic District and the Route 7/15 bypass (not specified on Land Use Policy Map)	Integrated adjacent to residential neighborhoods; (not specified on Land Use Policy Map)	Edwards Ferry Road and Route 7/15 bypass and southeast quadrant of Route 15 and the Route 15 bypass interchange (specified on the Land use Policy Map)	Northeast corner of the intersection of the Route 15 Bypass and East Market Street (Route 7) to Fort Evans Road
<b>Intensity</b>	FAR of 1 to 2	FAR of .2 to .3	FAR of .15 to .2	FAR .2 to .5	FAR .2 to .3
<b>Store size and Market Radius</b>	Small to moderate sized stores; region-wide attraction	Small sized stores; serves neighborhood (2 mile radius)	Moderate sized stores; serves local area (1 mile radius)	Moderate sized stores; serves the community within a 3 to 5 mile radius	Small to moderate sized stores; region-wide attraction
<b>Design</b>	Maintain historic integrity	Traditional design; conform to H-2 guidelines; upgrade visual integrity through private redevelopment	Compatible with residential uses; well landscaped and buffered; traditional design	Traditional; provide substantial landscaped buffer adjacent to roads; landscape extensive parking lots	Traditional design; conform to H-2 guidelines
<b>Mapped on Land Use Policy Map?</b>	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

The general commercial policies listed below seek to promote new development as market demand warrants, while protecting the integrity and viability of the historic downtown business district.

**General Commercial Land Use Policies:**

1. The historic downtown should remain a focal point for business, cultural and social activity.
2. The town should support commercial growth where it will have a positive economic and community effect.
3. The town should support commercial infill at existing commercial centers to achieve a consistent urban image and provide additional shopping opportunities.
4. Safe pedestrian access should be provided between commercial centers and surrounding residential neighborhoods.
5. New commercial centers should provide for adequate and appropriate parking, loading facilities, traffic movement, and pedestrian safety.
6. Consider properties fronting on Fort Evans Road inside the bypass (between East Market Street and the Route 15 Bypass) for commercial revitalization or redevelopment opportunities.

The following policies for each of these commercial categories complement the general commercial land use policies.

**Historic Commercial District:**

Overview: The area surrounding King and Market Streets forms the historic downtown commercial area of Leesburg. This area, including the surrounding residential district, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and forms a unique focal point for downtown business and social activity. The historic character of the buildings and intimate pedestrian scale are assets which combine to create a viable town center. The historic commercial district should retain its historic role as the governmental, entertainment, cultural, office and financial center of Leesburg, to be accomplished by coordinating public policies and investments with private redevelopment and rehabilitation efforts. To this end, the town, through its investments and regulations has encouraged a variety of retail, service, restaurant, entertainment, banking and residential uses in the historic district to provide expanded economic and social opportunities. In 1990, a new town government center and parking facility were developed on public grounds within the downtown. Market Station, a mixed-use retail and commercial office center and parking facility, was constructed in 1986 with Community Development Block Grant funds. The county court facilities in the heart of the downtown have been renovated and are being expanded. The new 150,000 square foot Loudoun County Government Center was completed in 1996.

**Historic Commercial District Policies:**

1. The town should promote continued physical improvement of downtown through landscaping, sign control and other public and private improvements.
2. The town should ensure the provision of adequate parking facilities to serve downtown commercial and

employment uses.

3. The town's land use regulations should support and encourage a balanced mix of uses downtown.
4. The historic district should remain the center of town and county government activities.
5. The area along South King Street between Loudoun Street to the north side of the W&OD Bike Trail and from Wirt Street eastward to the trailer park should be encouraged for potential revitalization or redevelopment opportunities.

#### Arterial Commercial:

Overview of Major Arterial Commercial areas:

**East Market Street Commercial Area.** This area includes properties between the Route 7/15 Bypass and the Historic District. East Market Street is the primary entrance into the town from the east; it reflects the typical strip commercial development pattern that has appeared during the last four decades on the outskirts of American towns and cities. The street is scaled to the automobile with little consistency in style of architecture and setbacks. Dominant land uses include major retail outlets, fast-food restaurants and commercial support facilities. High density residential uses and office uses are also represented.

Continued private redevelopment and upgrading of this area has been a high priority for the town since the mid-1980's, when the Town Council endorsed the Market Street Design Study recommendations. These recommendations resulted in amendments to the sign ordinance and landscaping regulations, in addition to a comprehensive street-tree planting program completed by the town. To further underscore the town's continued commitment to improved site planning and architectural design, the town approved the H-2 Historic Corridor Overlay District. The purpose of this district was to improve the visual integrity of these corridors through an architectural review process before the Town's Board of Architectural Review.

**Catoctin Circle - King Street Commercial Area.** The Catoctin-King Street area is a section of commercial and low-intensity industrial uses adjacent to the Historic District and East Market Street commercial area. Improving the visual integrity of this area through private redevelopment is a high priority for the town.

#### Arterial Commercial Policies:

1. The town should encourage improved landscaping, signs and shared access for individual businesses in arterial commercial areas.
2. Redevelopment in these areas should be compatible with adjacent residential and commercial uses and provide an appropriate transition to the Old and Historic District.

#### Neighborhood Retail Centers:

Overview: Neighborhood retail centers provide convenience goods, including groceries and drugs, plus personal, repair and professional services to satisfy the day-to-day needs of surrounding residential areas. When appropriately located, they can reduce dependence on the automobile for daily shopping needs. As in all commercial development, signs, traffic, exterior lighting, deliveries, and large quantities of solid waste generation are also typical of neighborhood retail centers. Because of their intended location in close proximity to residential areas, extraordinary care must be taken to assure compatibility of these uses with adjacent residential

neighborhoods.

**Neighborhood Retail Center Policies:**

1. The appropriateness of a neighborhood retail center should be determined on the basis of expected demand and relative proximity to existing commercial centers or areas designated for commercial development.
2. Locating neighborhood retail centers in residential areas requires special attention to siting, building design, landscaping, parking, pedestrian/automobile access, and safety to make them compatible with adjacent residences.
3. Due to the intended proximity of neighborhood retail with residential development, the following locational criteria shall be applied to any retail center proposed to abut or to be located across the street from a residentially designated area:
  - The site shall not be larger than five acres in area
  - No single use or business shall occupy more than 10,000 square feet of floor area
  - Total building floor area shall not exceed 40,000 square feet
  - At least 10 percent of the site shall be landscaped open space located in a manner that effectively buffers parking, service areas and substantial portions of the building from the public road and adjacent residential uses.
  - The provisions of the Land Use Compatibility Policy shall apply.

**Community/ Commercial Centers:**

Overview: Community commercial centers serve the shopping and service needs of the town as a whole and nearby areas. They typically take the form of shopping centers offering a wide variety of retail and service activities such as grocery stores, shops, restaurants, office space, and bank facilities. Larger centers of this type are usually "anchored" by department stores; they can include movie theaters, performance spaces, and recreational facilities such as ice skating rinks. Two community commercial centers are contemplated within the town:

**The Edwards Ferry Road Commercial Center.** This area is bisected by the Route 15 Bypass and Edwards Ferry Road. The future extension of Battlefield Parkway will also pass nearby. Commercial development projected for this area totals about one million square feet, primarily in the form of shopping centers, office space, bank branches, chain restaurants and gas stations. The first of these projects, the 300,000-square-foot Battlefield Shopping Center, opened in early 1992. The Shenandoah Square Shopping Center anchored by a Wal-Mart store opened in another quadrant of the intersection in June 1993. A third shopping center, potentially an enclosed mall, has been proposed for the northeast quadrant of this intersection.

**The Stratford Commercial Center.** This proposed center is located south of the Route 7/15 Bypass near the airport, alongside the future alignment of Battlefield Parkway just east of its planned interchange with the Dulles Greenway. The area is identified by the name of a proposed mixed use development between the bypass and the airport, for which rezoning was approved in 1988. The Stratford development would have a wide variety



of integrated uses including residential, commercial, office and community facilities. The major roads passing through or near this property will provide a strategic transportation network capable of serving large-scale employment centers.

Because it is strategically situated in the regional transportation network, Leesburg is a natural location for regionally-oriented commercial development. The Edwards Ferry Road commercial center already serves a market area beyond the town. In addition, planned improvements and additions to the transportation network suggest the future possibility of locating a community commercial center in the Dulles Greenway corridor close to Leesburg, perhaps near the Greenway interchange with relocated Route 653.

**The Greenway interchange.** With relocated Route 653 (Crosstrail Boulevard): this area could support a major retail center because of its accessibility in the highway network and proximity to population concentrations in Leesburg and eastern Loudoun County. If focused on a particular retail niche (for example, manufacturers' outlet shops), such a center could serve a regional market.

**The Leesburg South Commercial Center.** This future commercial area is proposed to be located southeast of the intersection of the Route 15 - Route 15 By-pass interchange. The site should not exceed approximately 35 acres and should serve the surrounding residential subdivisions. A minimum of 40% of the site should be used for offices and the balance for retail uses. The design of the development shall be compatible with adjoining existing and proposed residential developments.

#### Community Commercial Center Policies:

1. Community commercial centers should be developed as major social and economic focal points for surrounding residential developments.
2. Site planning for community commercial centers should provide for easy and safe pedestrian access from neighboring residential or employment areas and safe pedestrian access within the center.
3. Community commercial centers may include convenience shopping as well as a mixture of comparison and specialty shopping opportunities.

#### Regional Retail Center:

Overview: The only regional retail center site is approximately 60 acres located in the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Route 7 and the Route 15 Bypass known and known as "Leesburg Corner." This site is zoned B-3 and is intended to be developed as regional retail. The following policies are intended to encourage traditional design, compatible scale and regional attractiveness of the planned use:

#### Regional Retail Center Policies:

1. Ensure compatibility with the H-2 Corridor District Guidelines.
2. Stores shall be small to moderate sized and collectively have a region-wide market area.
3. The site shall be located within or contiguous to the Route 7/15 Bypass.
4. The retail use shall provide linkage to the Old and Historic District for the benefit of tourists through

on-site kiosks, information booths, transportation programs or other reasonable means deemed acceptable by the town.

5. A “regional factory outlet center” as defined below may be permitted subject to the following criteria:
  - ▶ The applicant shall clearly demonstrate that the proposed use is consistent with the definition of “regional factory outlet center” as follows: A retail shopping center of 20 or more stores wherein a substantial majority of the stores on the site are owned or leased by a merchandise manufacturer or an owner or licensee of a merchandise brand name. No single store shall contain a gross floor area greater than 60,000 square feet. Prior to final development plan approval of the center, the applicant shall demonstrate, based on customarily accepted market research information prepared by a qualified independent professional consultant that a substantial majority of the customers of the center reside at least ten miles from the center.
  - ▶ The application shall provide substantial evidence to assure that continued use as a regional factory outlet center into the foreseeable future.
  - ▶ Proffers, or other means lawful under the Code of Virginia, shall be used to assure the town of adherence to these provisions.

### Business Land Use

Overview: Development of business uses is important to Leesburg because they can provide employment opportunities for the town's residents and strengthen the town's economic base. To help achieve this objective, uses in this land use classification are intended to have the following characteristics:

- Employment uses: Employment uses have a higher than average number of employees per square foot of floor area, typically in the range of one employee or more per 250 square feet.
- Research and development orientation
- Export of goods or services to customers outside of Leesburg, including wholesale and distribution, conference, lodging and related uses.

A minority of the acreage in the “business land use” classification may be devoted to uses which directly or indirectly support the above uses, and, if there is a residential component, directly serve the residential uses.

Historically, Leesburg's business activity has reflected the town's role as a government, retail and service center. The town seeks to attract a broader business base that would include such activities as light manufacturing, wholesale distribution, research and development, and corporate offices. These types of employment uses bring money into the local economy in return for their products and services, which are purchased for “consumption” outside Leesburg. They also generate other economic activity such as warehousing, distribution and equipment maintenance.

This Plan envisions three categories of business-oriented development for the growth area within and adjacent to the town. All three provide for some mixture of land uses; they differ in terms of the general character of the business uses and the presence and nature of a residential component. Table 6.9 specifies minimum and maximum proportions of each use. All uses shall be subject to the “Development Guidelines” which follow this section.

**Business I- Regional Office/Retail:** This category features corporate business facilities in high-profile settings along major transportation corridors. Uses and density ranges are:

- Regional office developments of high visual quality and high trip generation potential. Includes office parks, research and development parks and similar uses of substantial scale.
- Uses which support or supplement existing business uses in the area, such as lodging, conference centers and employment-serving retail and service uses.
- *Density range:* Up to 1.0 FAR for non-residential uses.

Business II-Mixed Business: This category includes a broad range of business uses from offices to light industry and can include a substantial residential component. It can serve a transitional function between lower-density residential areas and higher-density business areas. Uses and density ranges are:

- Office and research & development uses on a lesser scale than Business I.
- Light and flex-industrial uses, such as campus-style industrial parks, smaller scale manufacturing and assembly operations. Industrial uses are limited to those which do not require outdoor storage and which have negligible emissions.
- Uses which support or supplement existing business uses in the area, such as lodging, conference centers, and employment-serving retail and service uses.
- A compatible residential component. This will usually consist of multi-family dwelling units and/or urban-density townhouses. It may include single-family detached units in peripheral areas that adjoin lower-density residential uses on neighboring properties.
- *Density range:* Up to 0.5 FAR for non-residential uses; up to 24 units per acre for residential uses.

Business III-Employment: This category is similar to Business II but allows no regional retail or residential uses. It is designated for areas affected by environmental factors or existing uses that are incompatible with residential use. Uses and density ranges are:

- Office and research & development uses.
- Light and flex-industrial uses, such as small-scale manufacturing and assembly, and repair. These uses may include outdoor storage.
- Warehousing and distribution uses.
- Related business and commercial uses offering ancillary goods and services.
- *Density range:* Up to 0.5 FAR.

#### Business Land Use Policies:

1. Commercial uses in business development may include support service and retail uses for employees, such as office supply stores, banks, restaurants, and other accessory service uses. If there is a residential component, commercial uses may also provide for local shopping and personal services needs of residents.
2. The town encourages development of complementary employment uses at and around the Leesburg Airport to obtain full economic benefit of the facility.

3. The town will require development in the airport noise zone to include noise attenuation techniques to protect the health and safety of residents and employees in the area.
4. Business use areas will include appropriate public and civic uses. When there is a substantial residential component, the public and civic uses will include schools, community centers, parks and playgrounds.
5. Development along Route 7 East will reflect high-quality site and building design and be subject to setback and landscaping requirements that will impart a parkway character to this important entrance corridor.
6. Uses that are high traffic volume generators, especially any commercial/retail component, should be located close to the servicing arterial to minimize traffic impact on the area generally.
7. Residential components of business areas should be located behind or beyond the business uses, which can serve to screen the residential uses from arterial traffic.
8. Commercial traffic should not have to pass through residential areas to access business uses.
9. Commercial uses in mixed use areas will be designed to be compatible with residential areas in scale, architectural treatment and landscaping.
10. Residential areas will be separated and buffered from non-residential uses by natural features, landscaping, and/or civic uses such as schools, places of worship, or community facilities. At the same time, the site circulation scheme should provide adequate internal road connections and pedestrian/bikeway links so that residents can have safe and convenient access to on-site commercial activities and workplaces without having to travel via the arterial road system.
11. If a tract of land is designated partly for Business II and partly for Business III, the entire tract may be treated as Business II for determining the percentages of the total land area allocated to various uses. However, residential components may not be located in the portion of the tract designated for Business III, and the business uses located next to residential areas shall be limited to those appropriate for a Business II community.
12. Smaller land parcels (less than 50 acres in size) may be considered for single-use development on an infill basis. This could include a residential or commercial development within a larger area designated for business use. In such cases, the proposed development's contribution to the area "mix" will be evaluated in the context of existing or approved development within 1,500 feet around the subject property. In the absence of adjoining development (existing or approved), the land would be expected to be developed with basic business uses representative of the designated category.
13. Mixed use development is encouraged in all Business land use classifications. The land use mix is intended to be generally in accordance with Table 6.9 except where otherwise noted.
14. The zoning ordinance shall be amended to create zoning districts which implement the Business I, II, and III land use classifications in general accordance with the policies of this element.
15. New zoning districts shall be created to implement the policies associated with Business I, II, and III Land Use Classifications.
16. A special exception is required for all retail, recreational, residential and entertainment uses.
17. Permitted uses shall be in general accordance with the following, subject to the provisions of appropriate zoning ordinances. Until such time as the zoning ordinance is amended or proffers are submitted which substantially incorporate all applicable Business Land Use policies set forth herein, only the primary and secondary uses shall be permitted.

Business I

- Primary Use: Office
- Secondary Uses: Uses which support or supplement existing business uses in the area, such as lodging, conference centers and employment-serving retail and service uses.
- Secondary uses may be permitted through a Special Exception, subject to the use mix in general accordance with Table 6.9, and development sequencing to assure a positive fiscal impact on the town.
- Customary ancillary uses

Business II

- Primary Uses: Office and Light Industrial Flex.
- Secondary Uses: Uses which support or supplement existing business uses in the area, such as lodging, conference centers and employment-serving retail and service uses.
- Secondary uses may be permitted through a Special Exception, subject to the use mix in general accordance with Table 6.9, and development sequencing to ensure a positive fiscal impact on the town.
- Customary ancillary uses

Business III

- Primary Uses: Light Industrial Flex and Office
- Secondary uses may be permitted through a Special Exception, subject to the use mix in general accordance with Table 6.9, and development sequencing to assure a positive fiscal impact on the town.
- Customary ancillary uses

Terms used in the Business Land Use section of this element are generally intended to mean the following:

- “Primary uses” are intended to be the predominant uses on a site and occupy not less than 60 percent of the area of a development
- “Secondary uses” are intended to be less prominent than primary uses, and occupy not more than 40 percent of the area of a development. These uses are intended to be built after or the same time as primary uses.
- “Local-serving retail” is a subcategory of “customary ancillary uses,” below, which are retail uses that serve the immediately surrounding area; retail other than regional. These uses and all associated signage and access, shall be oriented inward toward areas served, such as the residential component of the mixed use development of which it is a part.

- “Customary ancillary” uses are those uses which typically, directly, and primarily support primary and secondary uses. For example, customary ancillary uses for offices (a primary use) would be an office supply store, a computer store, a “lunch counter”-type restaurant which is designed to primarily serves the office uses, personal services, such as barber or beauty shop, business services, such as a copy center, postal services, secretarial services, and day care center, designed to serve employees of the area.
- “Office” is intended in the broadest sense to include not only traditional office functions, but desk top publishing, document reproduction, data transmission/reception and processing, telecommuting facilities, communications generally, and any research and development that can be carried out in offices.
- “Light industrial/flex” is intended to encompass all manufacturing, processing, research and development, wholesaling, distribution, showrooms, and associated offices in a manner that has little or no impact on surrounding property in terms of light, glare, noise, odor, smoke, particulates, vibration, radiation, outdoor storage, and other associated impacts. The “flex” component of this use refers to a flexible building design that provides an office-like exterior appearance, with interior dimensions, especially height, which allows a variety of light industrial, distribution, wholesaling or research and development uses without the need for exterior modification.
- “Special exception” is a legislative process wherein certain categories of uses deemed to have unique characteristics and impacts, are submitted to governmental scrutiny on a case by case basis, in order to insure compliance with standards designed to protect neighboring properties and the public.

Development Guidelines:

- Land Use Mix: The mix of uses recommended for business use areas is indicated in Table 6.9 on the following page.

**Table 6.9**  
**Recommended Land Use Mix In Business Areas**

TYPE OF USE <sup>1</sup>	BUSINESS I		BUSINESS II		BUSINESS III	
	Min. Required	Max. Allowed	Min. Required	Max. Allowed	Min. Required	Max. Allowed
Office	15%	70%	30% total	70% total	65% total	85% total
Light Industrial/Flex <sup>2</sup>	0%	30%				
Uses which support or supplement existing or concurrently developed business uses within 1,500' of the site under development, such as lodging, conference centers and employment-serving retail and service uses. <sup>3</sup>	0%	20% up to a maximum of 20 acres	0%	15% up to a maximum of 15 acres	0%	10% up to a maximum of 10 acres
Residential <sup>4</sup>	0%	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%
Public & Civic	5%	no max	5%	no max	5%	no max
Parks/Open Space	10%	no max	10%	no max	10%	no max

Percentages reflect proportion of the specific development site under unified ownership or control unless indicated otherwise.

**Dulles Greenway Interchange Areas:** Interchange areas (other than the Greenway/Bypass junction) are appropriate for automobile-oriented land uses that require good road access and visibility from the Greenway. These uses include offices and high density residential development if design techniques such as building clustering and noise attenuation in construction are used to counter the negative effects of locating next to a high-speed roadway.

**The Battlefield Parkway interchange area:** This area is strategically located in the transportation network. It is easily accessed from several major arterial links in the regional highway net that pass through Leesburg; it is adjacent to an expanding airport operation; and it is at the approximate termination point of future rail transit in the Greenway median. This interchange area should accommodate intermodal transfer functions, beginning with a major park-and-ride facility in connection with commuter bus service on the Greenway.

<sup>1</sup> Some uses may require a Special Exception; refer to Plan text for definition of uses

<sup>2</sup> Flex space shall not include retail uses

<sup>3</sup> Sites of 50 acres or more may have support uses which occupy up to the maximum of 20 acres regardless of the existence of other uses within 1,500' provided the support uses never exceed the maximum percentage of the acreage of the site indicated in the Table and are built concurrently with or after the business and light industrial flex uses.

<sup>4</sup> Residential uses, if built, shall be built concurrently with or after the business and light industrial uses and shall at no time exceed the maximum proportion indicated in the Table.

Industrial Land Use

Overview: This category is intended to accommodate extraction and processing uses such as quarries, lumber mills, recycling facilities, etc. It is designated for the area served by existing Route 653 on the west side of Goose Creek between the Tuscarora and Sycolin Creeks, where such uses already exist. Because of noise, emissions and outdoor storage needs, industrial uses are usually not compatible with residential or business communities. Uses may include:

- Raw material extraction, processing and distribution
- Fabrication, assembly and repair activities
- Storage and hauling operations

Industrial Land Use Policies:

1. Industrial uses are an integral part of the local economy. Their continued operation and expansion within designated areas will be accommodated and protected from the impacts of other land uses.
2. Industrial uses should be buffered from nearby residential and business uses to mitigate the effects of noise, odor or other emissions associated with the industrial uses.
3. Outdoor storage and equipment parking areas should be screened from neighboring non-industrial properties and roads.
4. If the area designated Industrial on the Land Use Policy Map is proposed to be reduced, the developer shall provide to the town a fiscal impact analysis that demonstrates the long term fiscal implications to the town as a part of any application for Plan amendment, rezoning, proffer amendment or similar action.



### **Action Program**

The following actions should be taken by the town during the next five years to facilitate implementation of the land use guidelines in this element.

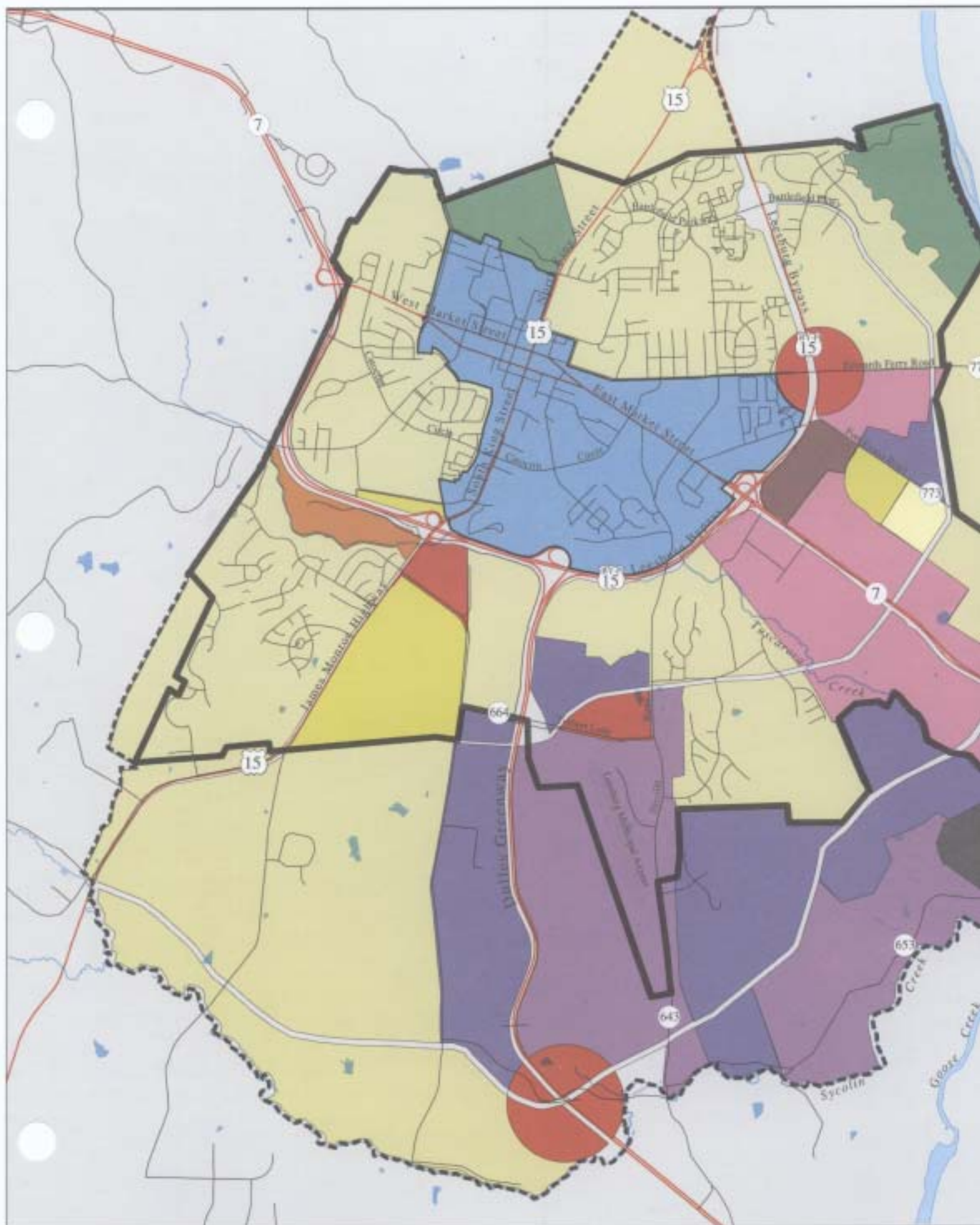
1. Review the Town Plan, the land use policy map and guidelines as appropriate and make changes when deemed necessary by and at times requested by the Town Council. At the minimum, this review must be done at least every five years.
2. Revise and adopt annually a Capital Improvements Program.
3. The town should consider incentives such as density bonuses that might be necessary to make development of an infill site financially feasible.
4. The town should develop zoning ordinance provisions that will allow flexibility in dealing with infill development proposals.
5. Promote the location of telecommuting and teleconferencing centers within the town.
6. Conduct a visioning project to help the town anticipate the type, location, magnitude and impacts of new development resulting from the opening of the Dulles Greenway, and to recommend what measures, if any, need to be taken to address such development.
7. Monitor the mix of development approved through rezonings and preliminary plats and seek a fiscally positive mix of residential dwelling unit types, commercial, business and industrial zoning and development. Take measures to assure that townhouse units are a minority portion of total dwelling units approved in future rezonings.
8. Prepare criteria for the content and review of a fiscal impact analysis that would be provided in those instances where policies set forth in this element call for such analysis.
9. Develop measures to promote and encourage mixed use development comprised of two or more of the following uses: retail, employment, entertainment, recreation, conference and lodging uses.
10. Evaluate the impact of the new County Government Center on the Old and Historic District and develop measures to address these impacts, if any.
11. Review town development regulations to assure that the intended quality of the town gateways is implemented in accordance with the policies set forth herein.
12. Refine the Town's objectives with regard to: Design of town Gateways, Scale of New Development, Use of Traditional Town Planning Concepts in new growth areas, and Implementation of Pedestrian, Bicycle and Trail Networks into the overall transportation system, based on the "Vision for the Future" discussed earlier in this Element. Prepare approaches to implement these objectives, if appropriate.
13. Apply the Land Use Compatibility Table to all rezonings, preliminary plats, and development applications.
14. Amend the zoning ordinance and Design and Construction Standards Manual as needed to implement all policies of this Element.
15. Accelerate the implementation of the Geographic Information System as a means of streamlining maintenance of the review criteria listed below.
16. Include in every staff report for application for rezoning, preliminary plat, and final plat, the proportion of dwelling units, by type (single-family detached, townhouses, and multi-family) contained in that application as well as the mix of dwelling unit types throughout the town to date.
17. Review and revise the Zoning Ordinance as appropriate to facilitate the dwelling unit mix policies of the town Plan.

**Annual Land Use Element Review Criteria**

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of town land use policies and standards, track:

- Changes in existing land use.
- Number of zoning permits issued by type and location.
- Number of proposed residential units and amount of commercial and industrial floor area versus projections.
- Vacant and developed land by zoning category and land use type.
- Conformance of zoning districts with Town Plan.
- Average length of time for processing development applications.
- Changes in downtown land use mix and building vacancies.
- Number of new townhouse units approved monthly, and percentage of townhouse units relative to total dwelling units.
- Demographic trends concerning people per dwelling unit and other population characteristics.
- Effectiveness of mixed use development in achieving town policies.




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# The Town of Leesburg in Virginia

## Land Use Policy



### Residential

-  Low Density
-  Medium Density
-  High Density

### Commercial and Employment

-  Business I (Regional Office)
-  Business II (Mixed)
-  Business III (Employment)
-  Industrial
-  Regional Retail
-  Community Commercial

### Miscellaneous

-  Infill
-  Major Parkland

-  Town Boundary
-  Urban Growth Boundary
-  Major Roads
-  Secondary Roads
-  Water

Scale: One Inch Equals Approximately 3,200 Feet.

*This map should not be interpreted independently  
of the text of the 1997 Town Plan.*

